



Communicable Disease Branch Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Weekly Key Points

July 21, 2020

The North Carolina Division of Public Health (NC DPH) Communicable Disease Branch will be releasing COVID-19 weekly key points that includes information discussed on the bi-weekly Tuesday Local Health Department call. Recordings of the call will not be made available; please use the information below as a summary of the topics presented on the call. As guidance changes, please use the most recent information provided. For questions, contact the NC DPH Communicable Disease Branch 24/7 Epidemiologist on Call at **919-733-3419**.

Important updates

- **New:** Local Public Health Communicable Disease Practice During COVID-19 Response PowerPoint (file attached)
- **Updated:** [Interim COVID-19 Contact Tracing Instructions for Local Health Departments](#)
- **Updated:** [Criteria for Return to Work for Healthcare Personnel with SARS-CoV-2 Infection \(Interim Guidance\)](#)
- **Updated:** [Discontinuation of Isolation for Persons with COVID-19 Not in Healthcare Settings](#)
- **Updated:** [Recommendation for Compassionate Care Visits in Nursing Homes](#)
- **Updated:** Find My Testing Place (file attached)

Contact Tracing

Updated contact tracing guidance is now available [here](#) in the CD Manual. The new guidance removes the requirement for daily monitoring, and moves the focus to initial contact, resource needs, and a preference for digital daily monitoring if more frequent monitoring is needed. We are preparing to release some state-level measures of contact tracing data to the public. The timeline is not solidified; however, we are hopeful this information will be available within the next two weeks. Releasing data to the public will illustrate that oftentimes contact tracing data is incomplete. We hope to provide context to the public by illustrating that data entry into multiple systems (NC EDSS and CCTO) can delay data entry and those delays may overshadow ongoing public health interventions.

The incomplete data highlights the inability to completely contain disease occurrence by case investigation and contact tracing during this phase of a pandemic, while also stressing community mitigation measures such as masking and staying home are central to controlling the spread of COVID-19.

Protocols and processes are being developed to allow the expansion of our contact tracing system to organizations who are also doing contact tracing, including universities. The hope is that LHDs and contacts can be relieved of some duplicative efforts. Security in CCTO will allow organizations only to see contacts they have created, or those assigned to them; LHDs will see any resident in their counties so LHD staff should be able to see people being monitored by other organizations.



LHD business units are currently being created in the CCTO contact tracing software. Testing is projected to take place this week and implementation next week (although delays may occur). Once it's completed, CCTO will operate like NC EDSS, where LHDs can view the contacts for their respective counties. Health departments that are a part of a district will see all counties within their health district.

North Carolina is evaluating an exposure notification application, which is based on Apple/Google databases, and will be customized for NC. Similar apps are already in use in Virginia and planned in South Carolina. The application will require users to opt-in. Evidence from other states suggests that it is likely to be utilized by "early adopters".

Requesting CCNC surge staff can be done by sending a brief email to: cctc-staffing@communitycarenc.org

NC EDSS

NC EDSS trainings for COVID-19 will occur every day of the week except Wednesday. NC EDSS basic training takes place each Wednesday. Currently, all NC EDSS trainings are one day long (9am-5pm) and offered virtually via GoToMeeting™. If you would like to schedule training for a group, please request your training 3-4 business days prior to training day.

Please send all training requests by email to NCEDSstrainings@dhhs.nc.gov. Once confirmed, the registration link and materials will be sent the day prior to training. Participants may attend the training from any site and using any device, although a computer (desktop or laptop) is strongly advised as opposed to a tablet. Upon completion of the training, passing participants will receive their log-in credentials.

Clinical Infection Prevention Guidance

We wanted to call you attention to important updates to [CDC's guidance regarding duration of isolation](#). Highlights include:

- Isolation can generally be discontinued 10 days after symptom onset and resolution of fever for at least 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing medications, and with improvement of other symptoms (removes 72-hour criteria).
- A test-based strategy (i.e. requiring negative tests) is no longer recommended to discontinue isolation except in very specific circumstances in consultation with infectious diseases experts.
- For persons previously diagnosed with symptomatic COVID-19 who remain asymptomatic after recovery, retesting is not recommended within 3 months after the date of symptom onset for the initial COVID-19 infection and quarantine is not recommended in the event of close contact with an infected person.
- For persons who never develop symptoms, isolation and other precautions can be discontinued 10 days after the date of their first positive RT-PCR test for SARS-CoV-2 RNA.
- For patients with severe illness, duration of isolation for up to 20 days after symptom onset may be warranted. Consider consultation with infection control experts.



NC DHHS is updating other guidance documents to reflect these changes. We will also be sharing this information with other groups, including with employers to discourage them from requiring negative results to allow employees to return to work. CDC has indicated that changes are still being made for consistency across other guidance documents.

Find My Testing Place

Please continue to review the updated 'Find My Testing Place LHD' Excel file weekly to ensure information is up to date and accurate. Please send the updated files or any related questions to SVC_Covid-19TestingSites@dhhs.nc.gov